6: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1956
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

The division between the male and female spheres of life was symbolized in the complex of beliefs and attitudes connected with the sacred trumpets. The three trumpets were kept in a carefully enclosed chamber adjoining the men's house, and access to the chamber could only be gained by traversing the sleeping quarters. Women were allowed to enter the men's house if they had a good reason, but the trumpet chamber was absolutely forbidden to them. Any woman who spied on the sacred trumpets was immediately punished by gang rape by the males of the village. The women, say the Mundurucú, once owned and played the trumpets and dominated the males. The men did all of the menial chores that the women do now. However, a culture hero stole the trumpets from the women, and their roles were reversed. Since that time the trumpets have been carefully guarded from them, and when new trumpets were made and installed in the men's house or when they were transferred from an old house to a newly built one, the women shut themselves inside their houses and bewailed the loss of the power-giving instruments.[4]

In order to keep the resident spirits happy, the men had to play the trumpets frequently. Three of the village men would play the instruments inside the chamber, and were occasionally relieved by others. At least once a year the trumpets were played all afternoon and night, accompanied by a general village feast. Another small ritual necessary to preserve the benevolent and protective attitude of the trumpet spirits towards the village was the custom of "feeding" the trumpets. Before partaking of any food served in the men's house, a man always entered the trumpet chamber, laid the three trumpets upon the ground and offered a half gourd of food at their mouths, saying "Here is your food. Eat. Make me lucky in the hunt."

The feeding and playing of the trumpets was the only Mundurucú ritual which did not involve the participation of people from other villages. A visitor from another village, however, could play the trumpets if he wished. Also, although the trumpets were clan property, moiety and clan membership did not disqualify a man from feeding or playing them. Any adult who knew how to play the instruments could do so. In view of the completely nonlocal nature of the clans, it seems incongruous that the clans owned the village trumpets. For instance, trumpets of the modern village of Cabruá belonged to the *Waxu* clan, which had no members in residence in the village. According to informants, the village trumpets received the clan affiliation of the man who made them. As we will see in the following historical reconstruction, this and many other rather paradoxical facts about Mundurucú culture might have a functional-historical explanation.

PATRILOCALITY TO MATRILOCALITY

I propose to present in this section a reconstruction of changes in Mundurucú social structure which will perhaps be both "conjectural" and "structural" to employ Radcliffe-Brown's (1952:49) categories of methods of analysis, but which will attempt to follow Eggan's recommendation (1954:755) to see "social structures and culture patterns over time." It has been shown that mid-nineteenth century Mundurucú society was as viable as most social sys-

7: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1957 SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

the individual who demonstrates proficiency in the attainment of a socially desirable goal will himself be valued and that this will motivate him to appropriate action, but this still does not answer the question of why the goal and the accompanying activity is valued. Newcomb (1950:329) has stated the same case with cogency in regard to Plains warfare.

The trophy head was prized as a symbol of Mundurucú prowess and of its owner's status, but it was also sought because it was the center of a number of magico-religious observances. The trophy was thought to be pleasing to the spirit protectors of the game animals because it had inherent power, contingent upon the proper observance of connected ritual acts. The possession of a trophy head thus resulted in greater economic abundance, and in this sense it served the same general purpose as does the Jivaro *tsantsa*. However, this aspect of the trophy quest does not cast much light upon Mundurucú headhunting, for alternate ways of pleasing the spirits were known and practiced. The ceremonial and shamanistic techniques of propitiating the spirit protectors of game animals were complex both in practice and in ideational content. In contrast, the linkage of the trophy head and the spirits was vague and ephemeral; it is probable that headhunting developed subsequent to the rites connected with the animal spirits and had become only loosely integrated with them. It is to be expected that any important social activity will become value and belief cathected in this manner, but it would be erroneous to proceed to explain the activity by its supporting ideology.

Finally, it should be considered that the Mundurucú looked upon fighting as a source of sport and excitement. The enemy was looked upon as game to be hunted, and the Mundurucú still speak of the pariwat in the same terms that they reserve for peccary and tapir. War was a relief from boredom, but it is not surprising that peace would be boring to people who consider themselves warriors. One might ask why they did not relieve boredom in log racing as do some groups, or in drinking bouts as did many of their neighbors. In short, can we not look upon activity and play drives as being inherent within the species and proceed from that vantage to explain the particular way they are manifested in particular cultures?

FUNCTIONS OF MUNDURUCÚ WARFARE

The manifest goals of warfare provide us with an understanding of the incentives that motivated the Mundurucú warrior. The religious and sportive aspects of warfare were found to be considerably more ephemeral than were the economic and prestige goals involved, but even the latter two depended upon the existence of a social organization that allowed and encouraged intensive military activity by its very nature. Moreover, the most important single motivation to hostility was a generalized aggressiveness that recognized no specific aims, and this factor yields the most important single clue to an understanding of Mundurucú warfare. If specific goals do not fully explain the extent and intensity of the pattern, and if the pressure of external circumstances did not force battle, then the main dynamics of warfare must be sought

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

a thunderous noise, audible only to the animals, and they follow it to its new home. 756 776

The manifestation of the mother of the game in coatá monkeys and land tortoises is recognized by the Mundurucú to be a temporary, and thus somewhat ephemeral, state. Only certain of these animals harbor the *putcha ši*, and they can be recognized only by a shaman. It is very important that they be identified as the carriers of the *putcha ši*, for if an unwary hunter kills one, he is subject to the vengeance of the spirit. Land tortoises bearing the *putcha ši* are occasionally caught by shamans and kept in secret places near the villages, where they are fed a drink made from sweet manioc and washed with water into which envira cherosa has been rubbed. The food and the delicate scent of the latter vine are gratifying to the *putcha ši*, and good hunting is thereby assured in the area. 224

There are other shamanistic techniques for pleasing the mother of the game and thus insuring an abundant game supply, and the major Mundurucú ceremonies are also dedicated to that end. But the *putcha ši* is a source of danger when offended, and the Mundurucú hunter must observe a strict etiquette toward game animals lest he attract the wrath of their mother. There are several ways of incurring the vengeance of the *putcha ši*. Killing and eating any game animal except one in which a *putcha ši* or the spirit mother of the particular species is traveling is considered to be perfectly legitimate. However, the animal must be killed primarily for its meat. The *putcha ši* becomes offended when a hunter kills any animal except the jaguar and leaves its carcass to rot, or when an animal is killed only for its hide. One may take the hide from an animal—and the Mundurucú sell hundreds of peccary hides every year to traders—but the meat of the animal must be eaten. Beyond this conservation measure it is considered reprehensible to make a joke about, or make vulgar use of, any part of an animal that has been killed, for one must observe a certain decorum and respect toward game. The apparatus and ritual acts that formed parts of the great ceremonies held for the spirit mothers are considered sacred and their use or performance on profane occasions would be most dangerous. It was for this reason that I was unable to induce the Mundurucú to enact any part of those ceremonies no longer practiced, although they were willing to describe them in detail. Finally, the sweet manioc drink offered to the *putcha ši* on ceremonial occasions must be ritually pure. If it was prepared by a woman who had recently had intercourse or who was menstruating at the time, the *putcha ši* would become extremely angry. [439] [825] [782] [784]

The *putcha ši* punishes humans by inflicting accidents upon them and by robbing their souls. Snakebites, cuts, falls, and all other accidental injuries are looked upon as the vengeance of the *putcha ši*, and the shaman must be called in to ascertain the reason for the attack. Moreover, subsequent to the accident, the *putcha ši* directs a malignant object into the body of the injured person, causing him to sicken and in some cases die. The shamans consider these among their most difficult cases, for as soon as they successfully extract one malignant object, the *putcha ši* sends another. [752]

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

are still believed to be in great danger. The stone cannot be touched; small ones 755
can be plucked from the patient's body or from the ground with a piece of charred cotton, but large stones are allowed to enter the ground and are then safely driven into a fire with the tip of a bow.

The *yakíp* and *wirakuá* sent by the souls of the game animals or by their spirit mothers cannot be touched either, but they are not considered as dangerous as the stones of the *Yuruparí*. To extract these malignant objects, the shaman, working alone, blows smoke upon the patient and massages his body. He then flicks the object out of the body with a *mutúm* feather upon which he has blown tobacco smoke. No attempt is made to catch and destroy the object, for this would further anger the spirits of the game. These cures are usually only temporarily efficacious, and other *yakíp* or *wirakuá* frequently strike the victim anew after his cure.

In addition to their supernatural curing techniques, most shamans are quite 752
skilled in the secular treatment of broken bones, dislocated muscles, and similar ills. On one occasion, my wife was in acute discomfort from a strained muscle in her back. The shaman instructed her to lie face downward across a hammock, and our interpreter was told to hold her legs while I maintained a firm grip on her shoulders. He then probed the musculature in the small of her back with his fingertips. Although she complained only of a generalized backache, he apparently believed that the source of the trouble was to be found in this area. When the shaman found the difficulty, he ordered the interpreter to pull on her left leg at his command. He then pressed gently but firmly into the musculature with his two thumbs and issued the order. The treatment was quite effective, for his patient's pain was relieved immediately.

The preceding account represents a fairly comprehensive description of 777
Mundurucú maladies and their treatment. But a final affliction recognized by the Mundurucú can be classified neither as illness nor wound. The concept of *ibikoium* is best translated as bad luck and is found widely distributed throughout the Amazon under the designation of *panema*. *Ibikoium* affects only men and becomes evident when a man hunts for several days without killing any game or prowls continually about the underbrush near the village without encountering a woman. So far as could be ascertained, bad luck is not caused by supernaturals. It strikes only men who do not rub their bodies daily after bathing with the ground root of a species of forest vine. The fragrance of this root lingers about the person and is thought to attract game animals and women. To insure good luck fully in one's pursuits, it is also believed necessary occasionally to drink sufficient quantities of this root mixed in water to induce vomiting. Most men undergo this purification process once or twice a year.

Shamanism and Spirits

Although Mundurucú shamans are not thought to control and use particular 756
spirits, they are believed to be in intimate contact with the supernatural world. 776
The shamans' souls are said to have the ability to travel to the afterworlds and 782
to the underworld of the *Kökeriwöt*, and they alone among the Mundurucú can

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

see and speak to certain supernatural beings. This power is of great importance to Mundurucú society, for the economic well-being of the community is believed to depend upon the proper propitiation of the spirit mothers of the game. Annual ceremonies were formerly held for this purpose, and the shaman had an important role in these rites. But the shaman was also responsible for pleasing the mothers of the game by 'feeding' them throughout the year. The latter required only the coöperation of other shamans and was of short duration and limited participation. Today, say informants, the spirit mothers are no longer fed because of the lack of sufficiently strong shamans. The Mundurucú believe that hunting is correspondingly poorer than in the old days and life less abundant.

The occasions when he fed the *putcha ši*, or mother of the game, constitute the only instances when the shaman went into a trance. A number of shamans were necessary for this performance. The strongest of them was usually selected to feed the *putcha ši*, and he prepared himself by magically inserting the three instruments known as *naneh* into his body. One was placed in the back of the neck and two others in the back of either knee. The shaman then lay in his hammock in the men's house and was covered with a blanket of buritĺ palm leaves. The other shamans lit large cigarettes rolled in tauarí bark and, inserting the lighted ends in their mouths, blew dense clouds of tobacco smoke into the hammock. Fortified by the *naneh* in his body and intoxicated by the smoke, the shaman fell into an extraordinary state in which he was able to see the supernaturals clearly. He then leaped out of the hammock, seized a bowl of *mõrí* (sweet manioc gruel), and, led by his *borombõ*, another instrument, dashed off to feed the *putcha ši*. He ran a short distance outside the village and there plunged into a hole in the ground which only he could see. He then traveled underground, shouting loudly in his passage, and emerged from another hole some distance beyond, from which point he continued his journey on the surface. The shaman visited the various manifestations of the *putcha ši* and fed *mõrí* to all of them. He then selected the one that pleased him most and brought it back to one of the deep springs near his village, where its influence would attract game animals. The shaman returned to his village by the same route used on his outward journey. When he arrived back in the men's house, his waiting fellow shamans seized him and immediately extracted the three *nanehs*, lest their power turn him into an animal. They then blew tobacco smoke on his body and washed and dried him, thus bringing him out of his dangerous state.

Only the strongest of shamans could feed the *putcha ši* personally. Weaker ones sent their *naneh* out alone to call the *putcha ši* together in the Land of the Game, and the shaman's soul went there to feed them. A shaman whose wife was pregnant could not travel under the ground, for the earth would close over him and trap him. One shaman related that this had once happened to a man, and the other shamans dug him out just in time.

The shaman also has the power to 'manufacture' the mother of the peccary (*daje ši*) and the mother of the tapir (*biu ši*). The mother of the tapir is made by killing a pregnant tapir and extracting the fetus, which is brought back

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

534
778 internal diameters of their resonant chambers were 2¾, 2¾, and 3¼ inches, respectively. The reed is made by splitting a 27 to 28-inch length of wet and pliant paxiuba palm root, hollowing out both halves and rejoining them by binding at either end. A stick slightly larger than the diameter of the cylinder is bound at right angles to the reed and prevents it from falling within the chamber when inserted. When one blows into the end of the reed it gives a flatulent sound similar to the American Bronx cheer, but when the reed is inserted into the resonant chamber of the *karōkō* and blown, it emits a deep reverberating tone. The sound emitted by these instruments is not said to be of supernatural origin, nor is it considered an imitation of the voice of spirits.

The actual playing usually takes place within the chamber where the instruments are stored. This chamber is a small extension at the southwest end of the men's house. The roof adjoins that of the main sleeping quarters and slopes to the ground at the west end at the same pitch. But unlike the open-sided dormitory, the *karōkō* chamber is completely walled with thatch in order to insure the secrecy of its contents. The trumpet chamber of the village of Cabruá measured 20 feet in length and 11½ feet in width. Owing to the pitch of the roof, however, one could walk erect for less than half the length of the room. The back of the chamber was generally used as a rubbish heap for the disposal of the old paxiuba root reeds. Suspended horizontally from the ceiling were two parallel poles, upon which the three trumpets were laid when not in use. Also hanging from the roof was a horn made of a hollow bamboo tube, to the end of which was attached an empty gourd; a design resembling an hourglass was cut in the side of the gourd. The over-all length of the instrument was 22 inches, and the length of the bamboo tube was 16½ inches. This particular horn was used to emulate the roar of the jaguar, or *iši rap nyun ipichat*, which is the eponymous name of one of the spirit companions of the trumpets of Cabruá.

[782] The spirits residing within the *karōkō* become displeased, say the Mundurucú, if not properly fed and played. Accordingly, every night when the men gather in front of the men's house for their meal, one of them brings a half-gourd of food into the chamber, lays the trumpets on the ground, and offers food to the mouth of each. The playing of the trumpets is somewhat more irregular and infrequent, although the older men claim that they were played daily in times past.

The trumpets are usually played during the late afternoon and shortly after nightfall. Although they are nominally considered to be the property of a particular clan, any man is allowed to play them. These are not especially sacred occasions. Although other men are free to watch the three players performing, they generally amuse themselves in other ways, as guitar playing, talking, or making artifacts. The women, who go about their work nonchalantly at these times, always seem to know who the performers are, despite the fact that sight of the instruments is absolutely forbidden to them and the trumpet chamber is carefully shielded from their view.

The actual music produced by the three *karōkō* players was not recorded and can be described only as a deep and rather monotonous dirge. The music is always

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

that many new *karōkō* will be made. In the past, however, the installation of newly manufactured instruments called for a ceremony quite similar to that held when they were shifted to a new men's house. The trumpets are made in a temporary shelter situated deep in the forest, secure from the chance gaze of passing women. One man is responsible for their manufacture, and the *karōkō* are considered to belong to his clan and to harbor its spirits.[7]

Until they are properly installed in the men's house, the trumpets are referred to as *wiru onon*, or "jaguar with a beak." The Mundurucú explain this difference in nomenclature as being due to their reluctance to mention the proper names of new instruments in front of the women. The ceremony of installation is called *wiru onon bon*, or "going to get the jaguar with a beak." Invitations are sent to the residents of several other villages, and all are expected to bring their own *karōkō*. The male invitees leave their own communities with the trumpets well before dawn and proceed directly to the shelter where the new instruments are being made. Their women leave after daybreak and go to the host village. The assembled men feast throughout the day and at dusk form a procession to the village. This is almost identical to the one formed when old trumpets are being installed in a new village, except that the trumpets of several villages are played. After the new instruments are installed, the old ones are brought to the place where the former were made and are burned.

This description of Mundurucú ceremonialism shows that ritual emphasis was placed upon the propitiation of the spirit owners of game animals, warfare and the quest for trophy heads, and the placation of the clan and trumpet spirits. A unifying thread can be discerned in the fact that the proper care of the trophy head was regarded as a means of pleasing the animal spirits, and also that the trumpet spirits were vaguely conceived as being associated with those of the game. Furthermore, the curing ceremony was specifically devoted to retrieving souls stolen by the animal supernaturals.

Mythology and folklore reveal a continuation of the basic masculine theme of hunting and warfare in Mundurucú culture. The Mundurucú recognize spirit mothers of fish and aquatic animals, but these were propitiated only incidentally during the major ceremonies for the animal spirits; informants mentioned fish spirits in this connection as an afterthought. There is a striking absence of attention to horticulture both in the belief system and in the ceremonial cycle. Each species of domestic plant is believed to have a soul, but not a mother spirit. Songs were formerly sung to the species souls, when the particular plant was being sown, to insure a good harvest, and another song was sung to the garden at the time of burning the clearing. All these songs were better known by the men than by the women, although the latter did most of the horticultural work. No substantiation could be found for Tocantins' statement that the Mundurucú perform annual ceremonies for maize and manioc.[8]

[7] During the patrilocal phase of Mundurucú social structure, the maker of the trumpets probably belonged to the dominant, and perhaps only, clan of the village, and there was undoubtedly a closer functional relationship between clan and trumpet than under present matrilocal circumstances.

[8] Tocantins, 1877, pp. 133–134.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

leaf walls and a baffle doorway guarantee the privacy of the instruments. The Mundurucú believe that the karökö spirits protect the village and give it supernatural aid, but proper relations must be observed toward these supernaturals if their benevolence is to be maintained and their anger avoided. The trumpets and their spirits are pleased by being periodically played. This is now done about every other evening, but the older men claim that the ritual was formerly performed daily. The karökö consists of a set of three hollow cylinders with reeds set in the mouths; their sizes are slightly graded and the note produced by each is of a slightly different pitch, although all produce a low, vibrant sound. When they are played by the usual three-man group, the music sounds like a dirge.

In addition to playing the instruments, the men must "feed" them almost daily. This is done during the evening meal. The trumpets are laid on the floor, and one of the men holds a bowl of food momentarily before the end of each, saying: "Here, old people. Eat. And make me lucky in the hunt." The food is then brought outside and poured back into the community bowl and eaten.

It has been said that the functional connection between clan and trumpet has become extremely attentuated, and each karökö is now, in effect, part of a village cult. The karökö has a further function, however, in rationalizing and maintaining the social roles considered proper to either sex. Long ago, say the Mundurucú, there were no sacred musical instruments. Three women went to the forest one day and heard music issuing from a lagoon. They returned with nets and caught three fish, each of which turned into a trumpet. The women kept their discovery secret, but one day the men learned that they had musical instruments which they played in the forest, and demanded that they bring them to the village. The women

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

Few techniques for pleasing these animal spirits are now practiced, but in former times there were many. Powerful shamans, of whom there are now said to be but few, used to travel magically to the "Land of the Game" to "feed" the animal spirits, and the two most important ceremonies also had this purpose. These two rites, called the *Araiarai* and the *Dajearuparip* were held, as all Mundurucú ceremonials, during the rainy season, and were almost identical but for duration; the former was said to have occupied almost the whole rainy season, while the latter lasted ten days. In both, the game animals were honored and their spirit protectors summoned and offered a food particularly pleasing to them. Annual observance was not mandatory, but either the long or the short festival was usually held every year. Villages usually rotated the duty of staging the rite, and the residents of several communities were invited. A number of powerful shamans were a prerequisite to the ceremony and had to be recruited from many villages, for only they could ward off the attacks of evil spirits that were attracted by the ritual food offerings.

Other ceremonies were also held to celebrate the trophy heads taken during war. These rites lapsed, of course, with the end of headhunting in 1912. The game-animal ceremonies persisted into relatively recent times, however. The last Araiarai was held in the early 1930's, and the shorter Dajearuparip lasted until about 1945. The Mundurucú explain the lapse of the ceremonial cycle as caused by the contemporary lack of powerful shamans. There is some merit in this view, for sorcery executions, the migration to the Cururú River, and general loss of population have greatly lowered the number of shamans available in the savannah villages. Also, the Mundurucú look upon themselves as being in a degenerated state; they feel that their